

**U.S. Department of Energy
Technical Qualification Program**

***Conduct of Assessments
Topical Area***

Study Guide

for the

***Emergency Management Personnel
Qualification Standard***

March 1997

Conduct of Assessments for Emergency Management Personnel

Competency 4.6 Emergency management personnel shall demonstrate a working level knowledge of assessment techniques such as the planning and use of observations, interviews, and document reviews to assess Department of Energy (DOE) and facility performance, report results of assessments, and follow-up on actions taken as the result of assessments.

1. Supporting Knowledge and/or Skills

- a. Describe emergency management personnel roles with respect to oversight.
- b. Describe the assessment requirements and limitations associated with the emergency management personnel interface with contractor employees.
- c. Explain the essential elements of a performance-based assessment including the areas of investigation, fact-finding, and reporting.
- d. Describe the methods by which noncompliance is determined and communicated to contractor and Department management.
- e. Describe the contents of an assessment report.
- f. Using the findings from an assessment, develop an assessment report.
- g. Explain the significance of each of the following assessment-related activities:
 - Exit interviews
 - Closure process
 - Tracking to closure
 - Follow-up
 - Corrective action plans
- h. Participate in formal meetings between Department management and senior contractor management to discuss results of emergency management assessments.

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2. Self-Study Activities (corresponding to the intent of the above competency)

- NOTES:
- The DOE Orders are in a state of transition. Please refer to the following world wide web site for a cross reference of new and old Orders: www.explorer.doe.gov
 - Below are web sites containing many of the references you may need.

Web Sites		
Organization	Site Location	Notes
Department of Energy	http://cted.inel.gov/cted	Clearinghouse for Training, Education, and Development
Department of Energy	http://www.explorer.doe.gov/	DOE Standards, Guides, and Orders
U.S. House of Representatives	http://law.house.gov/cfr.htm	Searchable Code of Federal Regulations

Competency 2.22 addresses assessment techniques personnel can use to assess facility performance, report results, and follow up on actions taken as a result of the assessment. To support the review and understanding of the competency, Supporting Knowledge and Skills and Self-Study Information has been developed. The Self-Study Information specifically addresses those areas needed for understanding the competency. The supporting material for the Self-Study Information include the following documents:

- 10 CFR Part 830.120, Quality Assurance Requirements
- DOE Order 5700.6C, Quality Assurance
- DOE G 414.1-1, Implementation Guide for use with Independent and Management Assessment Requirements of 10 CFR 830.120 and DOE Order 5700.6C
- DOE-EM-STD-5505-96, Operations Assessments
- Performance Based Assessments, by Paul F. Wilson and Richard D. Pearson
- Project Management, A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling by Harold Kerzner

Read 10 CFR Part 830.120, Quality Assurance Requirements

Read DOE order 5700.6C, Quality Assurance

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Read sections I through section IV and Appendix B of implementation guide DOE G 414.1-1

EXERCISE 4.6-A In general terms describe the oversight activities required by the DOE Quality Assurance Orders.

EXERCISE 4.6-B Describe the difference between a management assessment and an independent assessment.

EXERCISE 4.6-C Why are thorough evaluations of importance to an organization?

EXERCISE 4.6-D List nine (9) quality assurance criteria used to determine acceptable and unacceptable performance.

Read chapters 1 through 3 of Performance Based Assessments.

EXERCISE 4.6-E State the three (3) types of assessments.

EXERCISE 4.6-F Which type of assessment provides the highest amount of objectivity? Why?

EXERCISE 4.6-G In addition to monitoring work performance and identifying abnormal performance and potential problems, what three other responsibilities does a person performing independent assessments have?

EXERCISE 4.6-H Describe the "Performance based" assessment approach.

Read chapters 4 and 5 of Performance Based Assessments.

Read sections 1 through 4 of DOE-EM-STD-5505-96, Operations Assessments

EXERCISE 4.6-I List and describe four (4) factors that must be considered when "determining the scope" of an assessment.

EXERCISE 4.6-J Describe the criteria used in assessing the programs of contractor activities.

EXERCISE 4.6-K List the six (6) elements of a program that should be evaluated.

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EXERCISE 4.6-L Which types of questions are NOT used during the interview process of an assessment? Why?

Read chapters 6 through 10 of Performance Based Assessments.

EXERCISE 4.6-M Which evaluation technique is used to test the differences that are beyond expected repeatability?

EXERCISE 4.6-N What is the purpose of the daily Briefing Meeting with Senior Management?

EXERCISE 4.6-O What items should be discussed at the daily team meetings?

EXERCISE 4.6-P You are assigned as an assessor and are to report the results to Management, describe the three (3) main parts of the presentation and the areas addressed in each of the areas.

EXERCISE 4.6-Q List the six (6) sections of a typical assessment report.

EXERCISE 4.6-R What are the three (3) stages of the writing process for developing an Assessment Report?

EXERCISE 4.6-S What is the deductive style or writing used in an Assessment Report?

Read Chapter 7 of Project Management, A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling.

EXERCISE 4.6-T To avoid conflicts and resolve conflicts that occur, what steps should be taken?

EXERCISE 4.6-U What are the three stages of conflict management?

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EXERCISE 4.6-V For each of the following conditions:

Determine if it is a possible source of conflict.
If yes, classify source of conflict.
Suggest a method of overcoming the problem.

Condition	Source of Conflict (Y/N)	Type of Conflict	Method of Overcoming
1. Team conducting assessment managed by first time team leader.			
2. Person conducting assessment responsible for developing procedure being assessed.			
3. Report generated using new procedure and format.			
4. Person generating report under pressure to complete report with fast turn around time.			
5. Person receiving report up all night with sick child.			

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3. Summary

Assessments

There are three recognized types of assessment: a. Internal, b. Self, and c. External (also known as Independent).

- a. Internal assessments are those performed by persons within the group or organization. Internal assessments do not offer the same objectivity as independent assessments.
- b. Self Assessment is the evaluation of an individual, group, or organization by that entity itself. Self Assessments are done on a routine, periodic basis.
- c. External (Independent) assessments are those conducted by someone other than the individual, group, or organization. An example of an independent assessment would be an assessment conducted by a regulatory agency. The advantage of an independent assessment is that the assessor is not associated with the actual process or activity.

Management and Independent Assessments

Both DOE Order 5700.6C, and 10 CFR Part 830.120 require that management and independent assessments be performed.

- a. Management assessments are performed on management issues and focus on how well the integrated quality program is working and should identify management problems. Management assessments may be either internal, self, or external assessments.
- b. Independent assessments focus on improving the quality of the processes that lead to the end product. Independent assessments are always external and are conducted by persons who do not have direct responsibilities in the area they are assessing.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of personnel performing independent assessments are to monitor work performance, identify abnormal performance and potential problems, identify opportunities for improvement, report results to a level of

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management having the authority to effect corrective action, and verify satisfactory resolution to problems.

Approaches

There are three approaches to the types of assessments listed above, a. Compliance, b. Compliance plus Effectiveness, and c. Performance Based.

- a. Compliance approach is the evaluation of items, processes, or activities against predetermined requirements.
- b. Compliance plus Effectiveness is an analysis focusing on the product, process, and system to determine if suitable requirements were imposed and implemented, resulting in a product which meets client expectations. This type of approach is better than the previous in that the terms "suitable requirements" and "which meets client expectations" are more restrictive and definitive.
- c. Performance Based assessments are merely a logical extension of the compliance plus effectiveness concept. Performance Based assessments provide additional focus toward client expectation, better practices, and process refinement. Performance Based relates to the outcome/result of an activity or process through direct observation and evaluation against defined requirements.

Elements of an Assessment

There are nine essential elements of conducting an assessment.

- a. Determining the Scope involves defining the boundaries for an evaluation. The following are factors to be considered when determining the assessment boundaries:
 - QA Systems- Refer to the criteria of DOE Order 5700.6C, 10 CFR 830.120, or the QA Manual of the facility being assessed.
 - Organizational Entities- Management personnel that have the responsibilities within the evaluation topic.
 - Locations- Physical area where assessment items exist.
 - Programs and Activities- Types of programmatic and work processes.
 - Hierarchy of Procedures- The level of procedures that are used to determine performance during the assessment.
 - Calendar Time- The time allotted for an assessment. Time can affect

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the population to be assessed. Compliance and performance based assessments use some prior time up to the present.

- b. Preparing the plan includes: scheduling the organization to be assessed, dates of the assessment, team member identification, purpose and scope of the assessment, arrangement for the entrance meeting, necessary escorts, and exit meeting.
- c. Conducting the entrance meeting involves the Team Leader introducing the participants, describing planned assessments, identifying points of contact, arranging for periodic briefings of the organizations being assessed, soliciting and answering questions, and arranging for the exit meeting.
- d. The interview process is a free exchange of information. It is during this time that a positive, cooperative climate is established. The types of questioning include: open, closed, probing, and leading/loading. Open questions are used to obtain general information, closed questions are used to obtain specific information, probing questions are used to obtain clarifying or additional information. Leading and loaded questions are to be avoided.
- e. Evaluation techniques are essential because they provide the means to determine acceptability. The techniques include: 1) Traceback, 2) Tracethrough, 3) Comparison, and 4) Reinspect/Retest.
 - 1) The Traceback method involves selecting samples from end results, tracing backwards through the activities that produced the results, evaluating each step of the activity, and continuing such an evaluation to the upper tier requirement.
 - 2) The Tracethrough method begins with the evaluation starting with the commitment of the upper tier requirement, tracing through the control model/standard, and evaluating each step until arriving at an end result.
 - 3) The Comparison method compares "from a requirement" to "the object of that requirement". It determines acceptability in terms of compliance with the requirement. Comparison always compares from the requirement to the object of the requirement. Because comparison determines acceptability, it is highly useful.

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- 4) The Reinspect/Retest technique requires the evaluation team to reinspect/retest the product, compare results with those obtained by the initial inspection/test, and explore the differences that are beyond expected repeatability.
- f. Deficiency identification describes the deficiency. A deficiency is a variance from a requirement. Deficiencies may be symptomatic, systematic, or inadvertent. Deficiencies that affect product quality, health, equipment reliability, and commitments to governmental agencies should be promptly reported to the contractor or DOE management.
- g. Conducting the exit interview is important because it verbally summarizes the assessment. The exit meeting should identify participants, discuss assessment results, deficiencies, items of concern, questions from the assessed organization, and subsequent schedule of events.
- h. Writing the report is documenting the result of an assessment. The purpose of a report is to provide documentation necessary to support findings and concerns identified by the assessor(s). The report should clearly state the status of reviewed areas and act as the reference for future discussions regarding corrective action plans.

Each assessment report will be unique, depending on the scope and results of the assessment. An example of a typical assessment report is shown in DOE Standard DOE-STD-1070-94 and DOE Standard DOE-STD-3006-95 and includes the following sections:

- 1) Cover Page
- 2) Summary
- 3) Background
- 4) Description of Assessment
- 5) Results and Recommendations
- 6) Conclusion
- i. Verification of corrective actions consists of the following elements: correction of reported items, correction of identical items, identification of error cause, and action to prevent recurrence. A tracking system is a useful tool to track the identification of an open item as well the completion status. Without tracking the status, a high probability exists that some necessary steps will not be taken because of the many actions involved.

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Quality Assurance Criteria

There are nine quality assurance criteria used to determine acceptable and unacceptable performance. These criteria are listed in Appendix B of DOE G 414.1-1, Implementation Guide for use with Independent and Management Assessment Requirements of 10 CFR 830.120 and DOE Order 5700.6C. The criteria, which are listed below, can be used as a guide to assist the assessor(s) while conducting an assessment:

- a. Programs
- b. Personnel Training and Qualification
- c. Quality Improvement
- d. Documents and Records
- e. Work Processes
- f. Design
- g. Procurement
- h. Inspection and Acceptance Testing
- i. Management Assessment and Independent Assessment

Assessing Contractor Activities

During the assessment of contractor activities there are certain criteria useful in determining the acceptance or noncompliance of an item or activity. The following criteria summarized from 10 CFR 830.120(c) and DOE Order 5700.6C, Quality Assurance, provide the basis for contractor assessments:

- **Programs-** Organizations shall develop a written plan that describes the organizational structure, functional responsibilities, levels of authority, and interfaces for those managing, performing, and assessing adequacy of work.
- **Personnel Training and Qualifications-** Personnel shall be trained and qualified to ensure they are capable of performing their assigned work. Training should emphasize correct performance of work, provide understanding of quality requirements, and stimulate professional development.
- **Quality Improvement-** The organization shall establish and implement processes to detect and prevent quality problems and to ensure quality improvement. Items and processes that do not meet established requirements shall be identified, controlled, and corrected. Correction shall include: identifying the cause of the problems and preventing

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reoccurrence. Item reliability, process implementation, and other quality-related information shall be reviewed and data analyzed to identify items and processes needing improvement.

- **Documents and Records-** Documents shall be prepared, reviewed, approved, issued, used, and revised to prescribed processes, specified requirements, or established designs.

Records should be maintained and provisions provided for retention, protection, preservation, traceability, accountability, and retrievability.

- **Work Processes-** Work should be performed to technical standards and administrative controls. Work shall be performed under controlled conditions using approved instructions, procedures, or other appropriate means.
- **Design-** Process should use sound engineering/scientific principles and appropriate standards. Design work, including changes, shall be incorporated into applicable requirements and design bases.
- **Procurement-** The method of obtaining items or services that meet established requirements and performed as specified. Prospective suppliers shall be evaluated and selected on the basis of specific criteria.
- **Inspection and Testing-** The process by which an item is deemed acceptable or not acceptable based on established acceptance and performance criteria.

Management Assessment- Management at all levels shall periodically assess the integrated quality assurance program and its performance. Problems that hinder the organization from achieving its objectives shall be identified and corrected.

Independent Assessment- Planned and periodic independent assessments shall be conducted to measure item quality and process effectiveness and to promote improvement. The organization performing independent assessments shall have sufficient authority and freedom from the line organization to carry out its responsibilities. Persons conducting independent assessments shall be technically qualified and knowledgeable in the areas assessed.

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Participating as an Assessor

To assess contractor activities and prepare necessary reports it is imperative that the assessor actually participate in an assessment of a contractor's performance. To participate in an assessment, the assessor should contact his/her Quality organization to make the necessary arrangements. The reasons for participating in an assessment of a contractor's performance are to learn the assessment process, demonstrate the capability of assessment performance, and enhance the quality of the item or process. The three activities pertinent to assessing a contractor's performance are described below.

a. Assessing a Contractor's Performance

To adequately assess a contractor's performance, it is important that the person doing the assessing understand the elements of conducting an assessment.

b. Reporting the Results to Management

Reporting the results to management can be accomplished in several ways: a) Daily Updates, b) Exit Meeting, and c) Assessment Report.

1) Daily Updates- This method is used to provide the following:

- Daily interchange of information
- Adjustment of schedules or assignments
- Summary of items assessed that day and the results
- Request of better support from organizations being assessed
- Areas of concern/potential findings

2) Exit Meeting- The Exit Meeting serves to present assessment findings, ensure understanding of the findings, and clarify any misunderstandings. If the organization being assessed was kept informed during the assessment process by daily updates, the organization should not be surprised by this presentation. Presentation of assessment findings should be consistent with information being prepared for the assessment report. If possible, a draft assessment report should be presented.

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- 3) **Assessment Report-** An effective report provides the contractor with a complete set of findings and recommendations. The report should be reviewed with contractor management for organization and accuracy prior to issuance.

Developing an Assessment Report

When developing an assessment report the writing process consist of three stages: Planning, Drafting, and Reviewing.

- a. **Planning-** The most important stage of the writing process. During this stage, critical decisions are made about the messages and how to develop and organize the messages. The end goal is to develop an outline that clearly and concisely conveys the message(s) to the organization. Such planning provides a road map for developing the written product.
- b. **Drafting-** During the drafting stage, the assessor writes the report using the results of the planning stage. In writing the report, the deductive style should be used and each paragraph should have focus and flow.

In using the deductive style, a general statement or conclusion is stated first, and then supporting information is added. The supporting information should be sufficient to prove the point of the general statement or conclusion.

- c. **Reviewing-** Consists of examining the written product. This examination should confirm that the written message is the intended message and that it is presented clearly and concisely. Review techniques include: time between drafting and reviewing, use of a cold reader, reading aloud, and focusing on paragraphs and sentences.

Conflict Management

Conflict is defined as that condition which will exist when two or more independent parties interact. Sources of conflict are: a. Individual factors, b. Organizational issues, and c. Communication. The sources of conflict are briefly described below:

- a. Individual factors include: background, social style, perceptions, and feelings.
- b. Organizational issues include: scarcity of resources, ambiguity over

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regulation, competition, and exceptions.

- c. Communication conflicts can arise from problems with sender, media, and receiver.

Conflict management is defined as the process of identifying, directing, and controlling the collection of factors that result from and contribute to conflict.

Stage 1 of conflict management is defining the conflict. Stage 2 is negotiating an agreement. Stage 3 is summarizing and reviewing. Once the conflict has been identified and it is determined that a meeting is necessary, the following conflict management techniques can be applied:

- Pause and think before reacting
- Keep the meeting under control
- Listen to all parties
- Maintain a give and take attitude
- Educate others tactfully
- Be willing to acknowledge when you are wrong

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4. Practice Exercise Answers

EXERCISE 4.6-A In general terms describe the oversight activities required by the DOE Quality Assurance Orders.

The DOE orders require the contractor to establish quality assurance programs to control their products and services. Assessments of these programs are required to ensure the quality of the product is maintained.

EXERCISE 4.6-B Describe the difference between a management assessment and an independent assessment.

Management assessments are conducted for the management of the facility. These assessments examine the programs and practices which run the facility. Independent assessments examine all element which affect item or service quality.

EXERCISE 4.6-C Why are thorough evaluations of importance to an organization?

Thorough evaluations support the credibility of the evaluation. Whatever conclusions are reached, there should be sufficient detail and supporting material to support the conclusion. The evaluated organization is more likely to adopt evaluations that are a true measure of their performance.

EXERCISE 4.6-D List nine (9) quality assurance criteria used to determine acceptable and unacceptable performance.

- Programs
- Personnel Training and Qualification
- Quality Improvement
- Documents and Records
- Work Processes
- Design
- Procurement
- Inspection and Acceptance Testing
- Management and Independent Assessment

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EXERCISE 4.6-E State the three (3) types of assessments.

- Internal
- Self
- External (also known as Independent)

EXERCISE 4.6-F Which type of assessment provides the highest amount of objectivity? Why?

External (Independent) assessments offer more objectivity. These assessments are those conducted by someone other than the individual, group, or organization. The advantage of an independent assessment is that the assessor is not associated with the actual process or activity.

EXERCISE 4.6-G In addition to monitoring work performance and identifying abnormal performance and potential problems, what three other responsibilities does a person performing independent assessments have?

- Identify opportunities for improvement
- Report results to a level of management having the authority to effect corrective action
- Verify satisfactory resolution to problems

EXERCISE 4.6-H Describe the "Performance based" assessment approach.

Performance Based assessments are merely a logical extension of the compliance plus effectiveness concept. Performance Based assessments provide additional focus toward client expectation, better practices, and process refinement. Performance Based relates to the outcome/result of an activity or process through direct observation and evaluation against defined requirements.

EXERCISE 4.6-I List and describe four (4) factors that must be considered when "determining the scope" of an assessment.

Any four of the following

- QA Systems- Refer to the criteria of DOE Order 5700.6C, 10 CFR 830.120, or the QA Manual of the facility being

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assessed.

- Organizational Entities- Management personnel that have the responsibilities within the evaluation topic.
- Locations- Physical area where assessment items exist.
- Programs and Activities- Types of programmatic and work processes.
- Hierarchy of Procedures- The level of procedures that are used to determine performance during the assessment.
- Calendar Time- The time allotted for an assessment. Time can affect the population to be assessed. Compliance and performance based assessments use some prior time up to the present.

EXERCISE 4.6-J Describe the criteria used in assessing the programs of contractor activities.

Programs- Organizations shall develop a written plan that describes the organizational structure, functional responsibilities, levels of authority, and interfaces for those managing, performing, and assessing adequacy of work.

EXERCISE 4.6-K List the six (6) elements of a program that should be evaluated.

- Commitments
- Organization
- Procedures
- Practice
- Records
- Product

EXERCISE 4.6-L Which types of questions are NOT used during the interview process of an assessment? Why?

Leading and loaded questions are to be avoided. Using leading and loaded questions prevent the free exchange of information.

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EXERCISE 4.6-M Which evaluation technique is used to test the differences that are beyond expected repeatability?

The Reinspect/Retest technique requires the evaluation team to reinspect/retest the product, compare results with those obtained by the initial inspection/test, and explore the differences that are beyond expected repeatability.

EXERCISE 4.6-N What is the purpose of the daily Briefing Meeting with Senior Management?

Allows the Team Leader to meet with the senior manager daily to ensure that the evaluation team and the evaluated organization arrive at the exit meeting with similar perspectives on the evaluation results.

EXERCISE 4.6-O What items should be discussed at the daily team meetings?

- Items for samples
- Areas of concerns
- Deficiencies
- Strengths

EXERCISE 4.6-P You are assigned as an assessor and are to report the results to Management, describe the three (3) main parts of the presentation and the areas addressed in each of the areas.

- 1) Introduction - provides the audience with the purpose and direction of the presentation.
 - Subject and purpose
 - Expected duration
 - Briefly describe major areas to be covered
 - Explanation of how questions will be handled.
- 2) Body of the presentation - provides all the information that needs to be comprehended. The following information should be presented for each area to be evaluated.
 - Criteria or requirement
 - Conditions
 - Problems or conclusions
 - Recommendations or commitments

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- 3) Conclusion - A short summarization of major ideas or points.

EXERCISE 4.6-Q List the six (6) sections of a typical assessment report.

- Cover Page
- Summary
- Background
- Description of Assessment
- Results and Recommendations
- Conclusion

EXERCISE 4.6-R What are the three (3) stages of the writing process for developing an Assessment Report?

- Planning
- Drafting
- Reviewing

EXERCISE 4.6-S What is the deductive style of writing used in an Assessment Report?

The first sentence of a paragraph is a general conclusion or statement of fact. The following portion of the paragraph provides sufficient information to prove the initial statement.

EXERCISE 4.6-T To avoid conflicts and resolve conflicts that occur, what steps should be taken?

- Ensure adequate preparation by the team
- Establish team responsibilities and communications
- Keep the organization being evaluated informed
- Involve the team leader
- Extract the facts on both sides of the issue
- Compare facts to requirements
- Either reach agreement or agree to disagree

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EXERCISE 4.6-U What are the three stages of conflict management?

- Defining the conflict
- Negotiating an agreement
- Summarizing and reviewing

EXERCISE 4.6-V For each of the following conditions:

Determine if it is a possible sources of conflict.
If yes, classify source of conflict.
Suggest a method of overcoming the problem.

Condition	Source of Conflict (Y/N)	Source of Conflict (Type)	Method of Overcoming
1. Team conducting assessment managed by first time team leader.	Possible	Individual Organizational	Possible perception of evaluated organization that the new leader is not capable/effective at performing the task. Less experienced people often regarded negatively. Ensure leader is trained and experienced in performing assessments. Separate people from the problem. Identify and address individual problem areas rather than large generalizations
2. Person conducting assessment responsible for developing procedure being assessed.	No	None	None

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Condition	Source of Conflict (Y/N)	Source of Conflict (Type)	Method of Overcoming
3. Report generated using new procedure and format.	Yes	Communication	Ensure that all personnel involved with process understand the new procedure and format. Provide objective evidence with validity of new process.
4. Person generating report under pressure to complete report with faster turn around time.	Yes	Individual Organizational	<p>Personnel with perception that more is required of them may react negatively. Justify the shorter time frame expected for the report. Validate the feasibility of the time. Consider negotiating an acceptable time.</p> <p>Scarcity of resources is potential organizational issue leading to conflict. Time is a valuable resource. Ensure that adequate time is available for accomplishing assigned tasks</p>
5. Person receiving report up all night with sick child.	Possible	Individual	Personnel that are fatigued may be unreceptive to perceived criticism, ensure that all comments are objective and can be supported.